

Testimony in SUPPORT of:

SB 1017: An Act Concerning Election Administration.

HB 6578: An Act Concerning Participation in Electoral Process

Dear GAE Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, Vice Chairs Sen. Haskell and Rep. Thomas, and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco and Honorable Members of the GAE Committee,

My name is John Stewart and I am a resident of Bolton. I support both of these two bills because they help increase the public's participation in our democracy.

SB 1017 helps people vote more easily by allowing easier access to absentee ballots and convenient return of the ballots. Too many citizens have trouble voting during the single day and limited locations and hours in our current voting system. Many states already have such systems in place and Connecticut should do so as well.

HB 6578 is important for two reasons. First, it codifies automatic voter registration (AVR) that occurs at the DMV. However, not everyone gets a drivers license, so AVR should be provided through other state agencies, such as the Department of Social Services, HUSKY, or state colleges and universities. Second, this bill returns the right to vote to people on parole. I believe, as a sociologist, that our criminal justice system disproportionately works against people of color, so denying the right to vote to people on parole is racist in practice, if not in intent. Our neighboring states and many others allow people on parole to vote and we need to do so as well.

Sincerely,

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